

his memory, but such a one as the Bohemia
of the time
still had to offer.

A glimpse of his life at that moment is given
in a few-
early newspaper articles, and particularly in
one of his first
books," La Confession de Claude/' which
pictured the shame-
less immorality prevailing in certain sets of
the Quartier
Latin, and the weakness that came upon
even a well-
meaning young man when cast into such a
sphere. At the
same time romance is blended with fact in the^{(C}
Confession";

and it would be quite a mistake to regard
Claude's mis-
tress, Laurence, as a portrait of the young -
woman to whom
Zola became attached. At the same time, the
aspirations
of Ms nature are well revealed in that book,
which beneath
some literary exaggeration retains instinct
with the genuine
disappointment of one who has found the
reality of love
very different from his dream of it

Some passages are certainly
autobiographical. The scene
is a *maison meublee*, which stood near the
Pantheon, in the
Hue Soufflot before that street was widened
and rebuilt.
Zola betook himself thither on being expelled
from his glass
cage near St. Etienne du Mont for non-
payment of rent.
The house was tenanted by students, their
mistresses and
other women, and the life led there was so
riotous and dis-

orderly that more than once the police came
down on the
place and removed some of the female tenants
to the prison
of St. Lazare. Here, then, Zola gathered
materials for "La
Confession de Claude"; here he elbowed his
characters
Jacques, Paquerette, Laurence, and Marie,
while sharing a
life of the greatest privation with the
companion who had
come to him. "Provence, the broad, sunlit
country-side, the
tears, the laughter, the hopes, the dreams,
the innocence